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THE MYSTERY OF THE ROSWELL UFO



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THE MYSTERY OF THE ROSWELL UFO

KEN McMURTRY

Illustrated by Lino Saffioti

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The state of New Mexico with an inset of the actual area of the crash.

Bonnie Atwater

Chronology



6th century B.C.—Biblical prophet Ezekiel reports close encounter of the third kind. First recorded report of contact with aliens.

15th century A.D.—Painting of Nativity scene in Florence, Italy, depicts UFO in background. (See next page.)

1896—

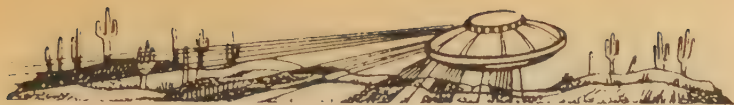
1897—Seven years before the first Wright brothers' flight, hundreds of people report sighting strange flying airships. The story of the "mysterious airships" is written up in newspapers in both America and Europe.



UFOlogists think that this 15th-century painting from the workshop of Fra Filippo Lippi includes a UFO in the upper right corner. There are other early depictions of what are believed to be UFOs in caves in southern France, in Japan, and throughout the southwestern United States.

Courtesy the Center for UFO Studies

1917—During World War I, many people report seeing German zeppelins flying over England. Later, German records indicate no such flights took place.



CHRONOLOGY

1939—*The War of the Worlds* radio drama panics New Jersey.

1942—

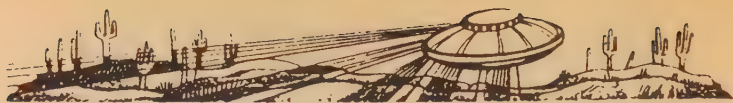
1945—World War II Allied pilots swap stories about glowing globs of light that often trail their flights. The objects are given the name “foo fighters” by the pilots.

1946—Balls of light are frequently reported streaking through the night skies over Sweden and Norway. These lights are nicknamed “ghost rockets.”

1947—Kenneth Arnold spots nine flying discs near Mt. Rainier in Washington State. He describes them as skimming through the air like a “saucer on water.” News of his sighting is reported from coast to coast in the United States.

July 3, 1947—William “Mac” Brazel finds wreckage of what is believed to be a flying saucer in a field near Corona, New Mexico.

July 6, 1947—Mac Brazel takes samples of the strange materials to the sheriff's

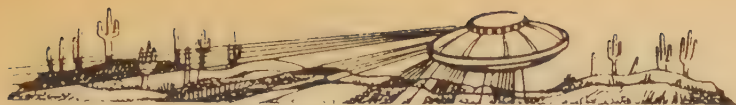


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office in Roswell, New Mexico. Military is informed and sends Major Jesse Marcel and Captain Cavitt to inspect the crash site.

July 7, 1947—Walter Haut, the army information officer at Roswell, issues a press release stating that the Army Air Corps had recovered a flying disc. Jesse Marcel flies to Fort Worth, Texas, with samples of strange materials collected from the debris at ranch where Mac Brazel was foreman. Marcel met with General Ramey. General Ramey holds a press conference, saying flying saucer reports were a mistake; the materials found were really a “downed weather balloon.”

July 8, 1947—Headlines across the country note the army’s mistake.



CHRONOLOGY

1947–1969—Government initiates Project Blue Book to investigate UFO reports. More than twelve thousand cases are analyzed. All but 701 had logical explanations.

Early 1950s—Grady “Barney” Barnett tells friends that he came across a crashed flying saucer near Magdalena, New Mexico, in early July 1947. He said the craft had been damaged and the crew members had been thrown from the spaceship. Hundreds of UFO sightings are reported throughout the world.

Late 1970s—Jesse Marcel, before his death, claims the army switched real materials with downed weather balloon in 1947, saying the materials he collected from ranch near Roswell were “not of this world.”

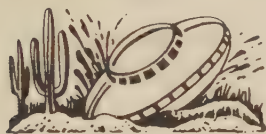
1980—*The Roswell Incident*, by Berlitz and Moore creates new interest in 1947 crash story.



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- 1986**—Japan Airlines flight 1628 Captain Kenju Terauchi reports encounter with a UFO while flying polar route. Crew members also give details.
- 1989**—Center for UFO Studies sends investigative team to the Roswell site for mapping of crash site and interviews.
- 1991**—Publication of most thoroughly researched book on the Roswell crash: *UFO Crash at Roswell*, by Kevin D. Randle and Donald R. Schmitt.
- 1992**—Author interviews Walter Haut, who confirms Jesse Marcel's statement about materials being "not of this world."

A Fire in the Sky



It had been a scorching hot day in New Mexico and now, after sunset, the desert was coming alive. The snakes were coming out from under the rocks, testing the air with their tongues. A rabbit chewed a blade of grass before taking a few hops and then stopping. In the distance a thick purple thunderhead was building on the horizon. A low rumble of thunder warned of the impending storm.

Dan and Loretta Wilmot sat on their porch in Roswell, New Mexico, facing northwest, watching the storm progress. It was July 2, 1947. To the northwest, lightning was flashing and sparking and spidering its way to the ground. It was heating and pushing the air around it so hard and so fast that it boomed in protest.

Rolling thunder traveled across the flat land-



Downtown Roswell, New Mexico, today is not very different from the way it looked when the crash occurred in 1947.

Shannon Gilligan

scape, sending vibrations through the yucca plants and Gila monsters alike.

The sounds of a swing band on the radio went white with static.

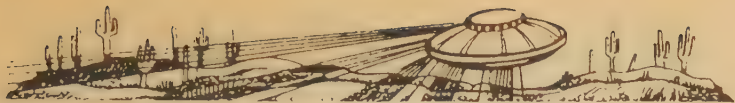
On Pleasant Street, a boy counted his firecrackers before going to bed.

At the nearby army air base, home of the 509th Army Air Force Bombardier Squadron, a soldier sat on his bunk polishing a trumpet.

In the distance to the northwest, in the direction of Corona, huge purple clouds seemed to walk on legs of lightning.

Dan Wilmot first saw it to the southeast, heading in the direction of the storm, in the direction of Corona. It was moving fast and low. Loretta, noticing the look on her husband's face, also looked up.

She saw it too, just as it passed over their house.



A FIRE IN THE SKY

The ice in her glass was still. It took a moment for her to catch her breath.

"Dan, what is it?" Loretta asked.

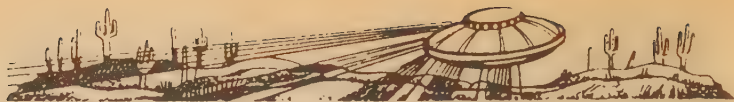
"A flying saucer," Dan Wilmot answered.

Sixty miles to the north, on a remote sheep ranch, William "Mac" Brazel awoke from a deep sleep. The kerosene lamp by his bed was dark and cold. The thunderstorm raged around him, but it wasn't the thunder that had awakened him. It sounded more like an explosion than the familiar boom of thunder.

He listened some more but heard nothing that would make him worry about his stock. In the morning he would check the pastures, he thought before falling back to sleep.

Several hours later, shortly after first light, Mac Brazel did exactly that. It was actually his horse who noticed it first. Mac was riding south under clear skies when the horse suddenly shied. Mac quickly looked for a snake, the usual cause of such commotion. But it wasn't a snake. Instead, it turned out to be metallic objects scattered in a field.

Mac got down off his horse to get a better look. Pieces of metal littered the ground for a stretch of several hundred yards. The pieces of metal were small and scattered everywhere. A few yards away,



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the earth was scraped. He could see a gouge in the ground, as if something big had slid along the earth uprooting the tough field grass and scrub.

It looked like an airplane crashed, Mac thought. But there were no signs of people, or seats, or anything else familiar. It was then that Mac Brazel realized that, in fact, nothing in front of him looked very familiar at all. He picked up a small piece of metal sheeting. It looked like metal, but it didn't seem to reflect sunlight. He tried bending the paper-thin piece of material and found that it was too stiff for his tough old cowboy hands.

"Well, I'll swan," he said aloud.

Next he tried whittling the material with his knife, but he couldn't shave off even the thinnest slice. Surprised by this "honery" stuff he struck a match and held it close to the metal. It didn't burn. The carbon from the match didn't even blacken it!

With growing excitement, Mac searched the field. He found pieces of several other puzzling substances. For example, he found nonmetallic pieces of something that looked like balsa sticks. These "sticks" were square, and some were as long as two feet. They would bend but would not break. He found a foillike substance, as thin as the wrapper on a pack of cigarettes. And he found something that looked like string, only made out of



A FIRE IN THE SKY

some strange material. It looked almost like thick strands of silk.

He rode back to the ranch and put the big piece of metal in the shed out by the horse corral. Then he went inside. Mac decided that as soon as chores were done, he would take his old truck out and drive over to his neighbors, the Proctors, to tell them about his discovery.

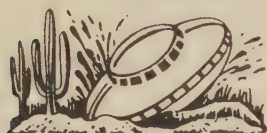
Mac took the thin foillike substance out of his pocket and looked at it again. He couldn't tear it. It was very strong. But he could fold it. After folding the small piece of foil he put it on the table while he got himself a cup of coffee.

When he sat down, Mac couldn't believe what he saw. The hair on his head prickled. He felt a chill run down his back as though he were a snake shedding its skin. Coffee dribbled from the tilted cup he held in his hand.

The folded metal foil was returning to its original shape. It was unfolding itself as if it were alive!



Encounters

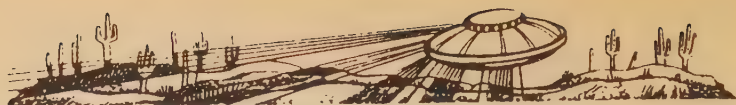


Mac Brazel may have found the remains of a crashed flying saucer, but he was far from the first person to have made contact with UFOs. Historically, sightings of strange objects in the air go back to the beginning of recorded history, not just in our culture, but in all cultures of the world.

The most often cited early reference to flying saucers is that of Ezekiel,* the biblical prophet. In the Old Testament, Ezekiel wrote, "... there came from the north a violent gale, accompanied by a great cloud, with fire flashing through it, and a radiance round about it, while out of the midst of it gleamed something with a luster like shining metal."

Four living creatures emerged from the gleaming metal object. "Their form was like that of

*Ezekiel 1:4-7, 15-19.



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man,” he wrote, “...and they sparkled like burnished bronze.”

These creatures may have come to earth in a flying saucer. The description in Ezekiel continues: “There was a wheel on the ground beside each of the four of them. The color of the wheel was like topaz; and the four of them had the same shape, their construction being as if one wheel were within another.” And later, when the creatures leave, “When they rose from the earth, the wheels rose along with them.”

Does it sound like a flying saucer to you? Many UFOlogists think so. A UFOlogist is a person who studies reports of these unidentified flying objects. The term “UFO” is simply the initials, what we call an acronym.

Ezekiel is just one of many historical instances of what UFOlogists have suspected to be reports of UFOs.

In 1239, a man named Matthew of Paris wrote of his experience with a UFO. In his journal, he recorded the following: “A great star like a torch appeared. It rose in the south and climbed the sky, giving out a great light.”

You might think that he had seen a shooting star or a comet from the description, but he went on to say that the light “turned toward the north,



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slowly, as if intending to take up a position in the sky. But when it was about in the middle of the sky, in our northern hemisphere, it left behind it smoke and sparks." For some reason, at this point, he was able to describe it more clearly as looking like "a great head" and said, "the front part was sparkling and the back part gave out smoke and flashes."

A writer named Erich von Däniken, the author of several bestsellers in the 1970s, argued that many artifacts from prehistory prove that the earth has been visited by aliens.

In one story he related a visit to Moscow and a meeting with Alexander Kasanzev. This man, a writer, showed him three ancient Japanese statues. The small ancient carvings had been discovered by archaeologists on the island of Hondo in Japan. The archaeological dig must have taken place before 1939, as they were given to Kasanzev in the spring of that year. Von Däniken described the carvings as looking like men wearing space suits. He said, "The figures have striking, indeed unmistakable, space-traveler characteristics..." Could these be ancient statues of spacemen as von Däniken suggested?

In almost every culture there are stories and myths of creatures capable of flight. The Assyri-



This photo of a UFO was taken accidentally by three fishermen in Montunau, New Zealand. They were actually aiming their camera at a boat early one morning when they caught this image instead. None recalls seeing the object moving through the sky, but the film has been tested and has not been altered.

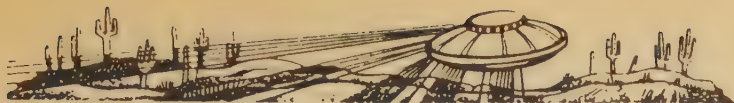
Courtesy the Center for UFO Studies

ans, for example, saw flying bulls. But we all know that bulls don't fly. Were they describing flying saucers?

In South America, the Nazca Indians built huge rock-lined pathways that were unremarkable on the ground, but from the air form intricate shapes, and look like modern-day aircraft runways. The purpose of these wonderful constructions remains a mystery.

There are many reports of rock drawings, or carvings, that depict saucerlike craft or humanlike figures dressed in outfits resembling space suits. These drawings have been found in caves from the Tassili Mountains in Algeria, to Guatemala, to the Kimberley district of Western Australia.

The Wright brothers flew their first airplane at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, in December 1903.



ENCOUNTERS

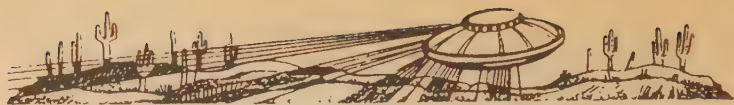
Yet, in the decade before the Wright brothers' historic flight, there were numerous sightings of strange flying phenomena.

These reports became known as the "great airship" sightings and took place in 1896 and 1897. People all across the United States described seeing a great cigar-shaped airship moving silently through the skies. These sightings were made by thousands of people and reported in newspapers across America.

A UFOlogist named Jenny Randles describes an interesting encounter that took place in 1912. Two Scottish children from the Isle of Muck were playing on the beach when two little "people" dressed in green approached them and asked them several questions.

The little people spoke both English and Gaelic. The children described a strange craft floating offshore which held another little person and a dog. The little people wanted the children to come with them, but they didn't. An older sister arrived in time to see the two children staring in the direction of the sea. The children later thought that they had been put into some sort of trance by the little people. The arrival of their sister caused them to awaken, perhaps, just in time.

There have been so many reported encounters with UFOs that finally someone classified them.



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In 1972, J. Allen Hynek wrote a book in which he created categories for the different kinds of contacts people have described having with UFOs, called "close encounters."

A close encounter of the first kind (abbreviated as CE-1) is a sighting at close range of a UFO. Of all the UFO encounters, this type is reported most.

People who study UFOs try to determine if what a person reported as a CE-1 was a true UFO or something else. They find this kind of encounter very difficult to investigate. There is no physical evidence. The UFOlogist is interested in finding out as much as possible about the sighting. A good UFO report on a CE-1 includes as much information as possible about where, when, and under what circumstances the CE-1 took place. This helps determine if another explanation for the sighting is possible. Maybe an airplane, weather balloon, or some other natural phenomenon was mistaken for a UFO.

Close encounters of the second kind (called CE-2) occur when there is physical evidence of a UFO. Have you heard of the crop circles in England? These have been reported on television, and there is now a book of pictures showing these mysterious rings.

The circles began occurring over four years ago in wheat fields in England. There are great cir-

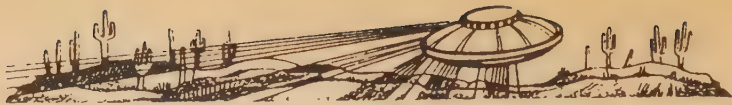


Crop circles in Bratton, England, July 25, 1990. Recently two farmers have stepped forward, claiming that they are the creators of the crop circles uproar. But skeptics wonder how they could have made the circles hundreds of miles apart on the same night.

Reuters/Bettmann

cular areas where the wheat has been bent from its base to the ground.

Since the crop circles first began appearing in England, they have been reported in other countries as well, but most have appeared in the British Isles. Several factors contribute to the mystery. First, no one has ever seen how they are made—one morning a farmer goes out to his field and finds a giant circle. Second, they are huge and often very intricate in design. The circle is always the central design motif, but this is often embel-



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lished. Sometimes the shapes look like giant keys or mazes.

Many people believe the circles were created by UFOs, and that the impressions in the wheat, which are most beautiful when viewed from the air, represent the physical evidence left behind by them.

People were extremely persuaded if not convinced that these circles were otherworldly, until the summer of 1991, when two British farmers came forward and said that they had made the crop circles using a device made out of a flat piece of wood. They were shown on television making a circle in a wheat field. It looked very much like the crop circles.

Many people believe that while these two men may have made some of the circles, they could not have made all of the circles that have been reported. The number of circles and the distance between them seems too great for just two men alone to accomplish. Circles have been reported in Scotland, Wales, England, France, and Belgium.

The circles began appearing a little over four years ago. For the past three years scientists in England have been studying the circles trying to unravel the mystery of how they were created. Volunteers have watched the fields at night hoping to discover a clue that would help solve the



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mystery. Keeping in mind the interest in these circles, it seems unlikely that two men could have created them all without being discovered.

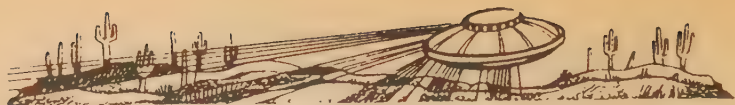
There is a step even beyond CE-2 contacts. A close encounter of the third kind (CE-3) involves actual contact with the occupants of a UFO.

One of the most famous CE-3 contacts took place in Rendlesham Forest, England, in late 1980. Even the name itself, Rendlesham Forest, is like something out of a fairy tale. But the military base there is real and many believe a close encounter of the third kind took place in this forest.

It was just after Christmas, December 27, 1980, when some servicemen stationed at the Royal Air Force base, near the forest, saw something come down in the woods nearby. It was early evening, and, since they had seen lights on the craft, they thought that it was a small aircraft in some kind of trouble.

For security reasons, and out of concern, a small group of soldiers was sent to investigate. They drove to the edge of the woods and walked into the forest. They entered a clearing made eerie by a strange yellowish fog. The fog slowly cleared, and they saw an object that looked like a giant saucer, resting on three spiderlike legs, sitting in the clearing.

When they tried to approach, it would lift into



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the air and move. Eventually, other servicemen arrived and saw the craft. A total of about thirty people saw the ship before it flew away.

A few nights later, according to the stories, the craft, or one very similar, returned. Again, a group of soldiers headed into the woods. Their leader was a man named Williams, who was a wing commander at the base.

This time, the soldiers were in for a surprise. Not only was the spacecraft in the clearing, but three alien creatures were floating beneath the craft in a beam of light. The alien creatures have been described as small humanoids wearing silver suits. The three were identical in appearance. Wing Commander Williams tried to communicate with the creatures, but they did not respond verbally. Eventually, they entered the craft, and it left the area flying in the direction of the North Sea.

Why were they there? Some say that it was because their craft was damaged and they were in the process of making repairs when discovered by the soldiers. Another theory holds that UFOs are keeping track of military operations. There are a high number of CE-1 sightings near military installations.

The latest type of encounter that has been described is called the CE-4, or close encounter of



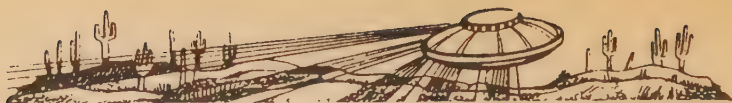
Ralph Ditter took this shot with his Polaroid in Zanesville, Ohio, in February 1967. Notice the faint stream of exhaust to the left of the craft.

Courtesy Photofest

the fourth kind. It is by far the scariest. Why? Because many people have reported being abducted by aliens and taken aboard UFOs.

Most often people don't remember the abduction, but they do know that a piece of time is missing from their lives.

Under hypnosis, these abductees tell very similar stories. They are taken aboard a UFO and given what they believe to be an examination. When they returned they have a memory loss of the time they were away; usually only a few hours. They appear unhurt, but often these people find small, dimplelike marks somewhere on their bodies—a small indentation like that on the surface of a golf ball.



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No one knows for sure if people have been kidnapped and taken on board spaceships by aliens, but the stories told by people who claim a CE-4 are remarkably similar.

So if there are people who have seen these extraterrestrial beings, what do they look like? Most often they are described as having large, dark, almond-shaped eyes, like big black teardrops, set in a head that is pear-shaped and larger than a human's.

While these visitors have oversized heads, they are frequently described as short, between three and four feet tall.

They don't have visible ears, and they don't seem to have hair, although some people have described a kind of fuzz—similar to that on a peach—on top of their heads. Their mouths are slits, and their noses don't get in the way of anything (their noses are often described as being tiny—just two small nostrils).

They are described as having four fingers: two are long with some kind of bulblike suction tip, and two are short. What about a thumb? As humans, we are different from animals because we can hold things. We can hold things because we have a thumb, sometimes referred to as an opposable digit.

Maybe they have thumbs.

Concept Movies

Steven Spielberg used one of the CE categories for his movie, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, which involves actual contact with aliens. In fact, Dr. Hynek has a bit part in the movie. He appears near the end of the movie, when the mother ship drops a ramp; he's the one with the small white goatee.

In the 1950s a new theory of the origin of UFOs surfaced. A famous scientist, Albert Einstein, theorized that if a person could travel faster than the speed of light, the person would break free of time restraints. That is, he could time-travel.

Supporters of this theory believe that UFOs may be time travelers from our own planet. This theory and possibly H. G. Wells's novel *The Time Machine* inspired the popular Back to the Future series of films.

All physical matter is made up of combinations of linked atoms. If we could somehow take these atoms apart, send them to a new location by means of light or radio waves, and then reassemble them, we would have a great way of traveling across space. Some UFOlogists believe that this is the secret of space travel. This is still just a concept, but we can see it through the magic of movies. In the Star Trek movies (and television shows) we often hear a crew member request, "Beam me up, Scottie."



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Their arms are often described as being long and slender, and their skin a kind of gray. No one has been able to say there is a difference between the male and female alien. Maybe they are all one kind.

Because the heads are larger, they are thought to be of higher intelligence. This makes sense. If they really exist, they have figured out how to travel very fast through space even if they don't have thumbs.

They don't seem to be concerned about fashion. Most often they are described as wearing a coverall or jumpsuit.

The above description is the one most often given. But others have described encounters with beings or things that looked very different. A forester named Bob Taylor, who lives in Livingston, Scotland, was looking for stray animals on November 9, 1979, when he came across a strange object in the woods.

The object was about twenty feet across, with antennas circling its base. When Bob approached, two small ball-like creatures dropped from the craft. They were round and covered with spikes. Before he knew it they were beside him and he felt them against his legs. Bob passed out, but when he awakened the dome-shaped craft and the spike-ball creatures were gone.



ENCOUNTERS

When Bob arrived home he reported the incident to the local police. His pants were torn, on both sides, and he had a scratch on his leg.

Over the years there have been reported sightings of "little green men." In Ohio in 1966 and 1967 there were reports of a winged creature, which kept turning up, believed to be from a UFO. This winged creature was reported as being about ten feet tall with giant wings and a blood red face. The creature was capable of super-fast flight without moving its wings.

It could be that we are being visited by beings from different planets who look quite different from one another.

But are these encounters real? If not, why do so many people think they see these things? Do they really exist only in our minds? Or are they an illusion of some sort?

The people who reported sighting flying discs (later called flying saucers and then later UFOs) in the 1940s and throughout history have not been kooks. For the most part, they are average people, who would not benefit in any way from making up stories about what they had seen.

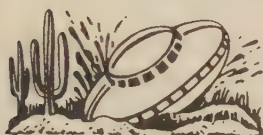
Mac Brazel was just such a man; he had nothing to gain from the events that occurred in early July 1947, at least not initially. He just got curious about what he found. The rest was fate.



Rex Heflin, an employee of the County Highway Department, snapped this photo of a UFO while working in Santa Ana, California, on September 20, 1965. He estimated that the disc was thirty feet across and eight feet thick at its widest point. At the time the photo was taken, there were numerous reports throughout the west of “flying saucers.”

Courtesy Photofest

The Neighbors



The Proctor family, Mac Brazel's closest neighbors, lived ten miles away. The afternoon heat shimmered off the road as Mac guided his old truck over the blacktop toward their house. He had a small piece of the metallike material in his pocket to show them. Maybe they'd want to have a look at the field for themselves.

As Mac's truck waded through the heat shimmers at forty miles an hour, his mind was back at the sheep pasture littered with this strange debris. It was odd, he thought, that the sheep would not cross over the area littered with wreckage to the pasture beyond. His thoughts turning to the practical side of the crash site, he realized the cleanup was going to be a major undertaking.



The landscape of Corona, New Mexico, where the crash actually occurred. The exact location of the crash is kept secret even today, although it's more out of respect for private property than for national security reasons.

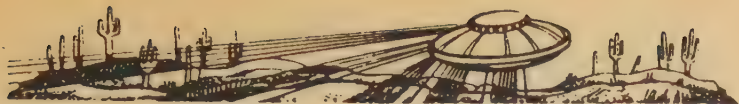
Loretta Proctor made a pitcher of iced tea while Mac sat on the porch with her husband, Floyd.

Mac showed Floyd and Loretta a sliver of the metallic material he had found in the field.

"Looks like some kind of metal to me," Floyd said. "Where'd you get it?"

Mac told them about finding the pasture littered with the strange material.

Mac told them his theory that it might be part of some secret military experiment. After all, this part of New Mexico was the center of a number of military projects. The atomic bomb had been developed and tested nearby at White Sands and Alamogordo, and members of the 509th Bomb Squadron, stationed at Roswell, were the only air teams trained in the delivery of atomic weapons.



THE NEIGHBORS

Pilots from the 509th had dropped the bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

"If it were a military experiment, they'd have been out in your pasture this morning making sure nobody found out about it," Floyd ventured.

Loretta looked at the piece. "I've never seen anything like it."

"I thought it might be a plane crash," Mac said, "but there's no sign of any people or any part of an airplane that I recognize."

"No word of any crash on the radio this morning," Loretta volunteered.

"Another funny thing," Mac said, "look at this." Mac took out a match and struck and held it under the sliver of metal. The flame flattened on the underside, mushroomed into a circle of heat about one inch in diameter.

Mac held the match until the flame had burned down the wood stick close to his yellowed fingernails. "Stuff doesn't burn or melt. Doesn't even blacken from the smoke."

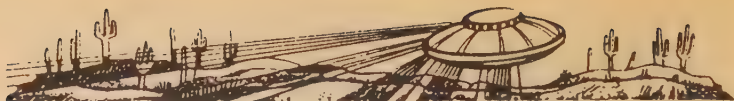
They all thought this very odd.

"It won't cut either," Mac said.

Floyd took out his pocketknife and opened the whittling blade. "Let me have a go at it," he said.

Mac handed over the small piece of metal.

While Floyd tried shaving off a piece of metal, Loretta filled their iced tea glasses.



THE MYSTERY OF THE ROSWELL UFO

"Well, that's the darndest thing I've ever seen." Floyd folded his knife and replaced it in his pocket.

"What do you think it is?" Mac hoped his neighbors would be able to give him some answers.

"I really don't know," Floyd said.

"Out there in the field, it looks like something scraped along the ground," Mac said. Then he picked up the piece of material and held it out of the shade in the sunlight. "It doesn't seem to reflect the light."

"Do you think it could be a flying disc everyone's been talking about lately?" Floyd asked.

"I don't know what it is. Maybe part of one." Mac couldn't believe his own voice. "Not enough material for a whole one. No sign of life. Just little bits of this metallic stuff scattered all over the place."

"What are you going to do with it?" Floyd asked.

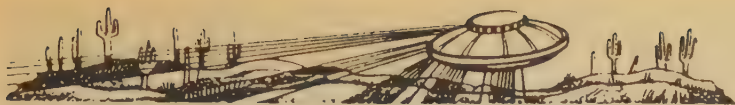
"I don't know," Mac said.

"We'll keep our ears open. If we hear that part of a plane fell apart over your pasture, we'll let you know."

"Thanks," Mac said.

When he got up to leave, Loretta said, "Mac, if you think it is part of a flying disc you should let the sheriff know."

"I'll think about it." Mac smiled. "Maybe he'll come out and clean up the mess."



THE NEIGHBORS

"Another thing," Loretta said, "I heard that some group in California is offering a reward to anyone who could prove that these flying discs are real. Maybe you can collect the money."

Mac got into his truck. "If you want to come take a look, you're welcome."

"With gas and tires costing what they do," Floyd said, "I think we'll have to make do with what you've shown us."

The seat was hot. Mac's shirt stuck to his body. The pickup cab was like an oven.

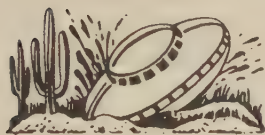
Mac was pulling into his own yard when he remembered the sound that had awakened him last night. An explosion. Maybe it *was* part of a flying disc?!

That evening, Mac went out to the field and found the biggest piece of the metallic debris that he could. Fearing that maybe this was some kind of dream or that someone would come in the night and clean up the field, he took the piece with him back to the ranch where he stored it in a shed.

After dinner, Mac blew out the kerosene lamp and went to bed. Tomorrow was the Fourth of July.



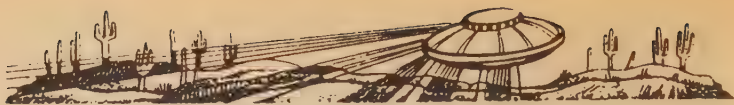
Sightings



In the few years before William “Mac” Brazel discovered his field littered with debris, reports of sightings of strange flying objects were becoming more and more common.

In the early 1940s, during the Second World War, many fighter pilots reported seeing strange lights and disc-shaped objects while flying their missions. At first it was believed that these might be some type of secret weapon system, developed by the enemy, to destroy Allied pilots’ aircraft. Eventually, when no harm was done by the strange objects, the pilots gave the UFOs a nickname. They called them “foo fighters.”

In 1947, reports and theories about these strange flying discs were being published almost every day in newspapers across the country. Some



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people speculated that these aircraft were some sort of secret military project being developed by our government or the government of an enemy nation.

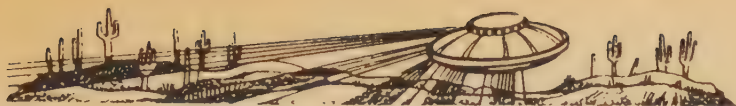
The reasoning behind this theory was based on the fact that most of the sightings were made near military installations. There were reports of numerous sightings in New Mexico, where the government was engaged in top-secret nuclear projects.

Carl Jung, a famous psychoanalyst, suggested that these flying objects were only imagined. This theory did not receive much support from the hundreds of people who had seen the flying discs.

The U. S. government denied having anything to do with the strange flying crafts that were being reported so frequently. After that, a third speculation about the origin of these flying discs was put forth: that they were from another planet, extraterrestrials. The idea that these flying saucers might be from another planet was, and still is, the most popular belief about their origins.

Could it be that in 1947, in a field seventy miles northwest of Roswell, New Mexico, William "Mac" Brazel had found pieces of a flying saucer?

Mac Brazel's find came in the midst of a wave of sightings. A week earlier, on June 24, 1947, a pilot named Kenneth Arnold was flying near Mt.



SIGHTINGS

Rainier in Washington State, when he saw nine disc-shaped objects flying over the Cascades. At first he thought they might be some sort of optical illusion, some trick of reflected sunlight. He followed the flying discs in his plane and watched them do maneuvers that he later described as being, "like a saucer skipping over water."

A newspaper reporter, hearing this description, later labeled the unidentified flying aircraft "flying saucers." Although Arnold's sighting was not the first of its kind, the publicity it received was worldwide. A kind of flying disc excitement seemed to take hold of the country.

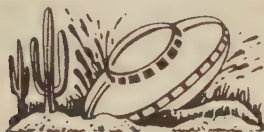
Groups of citizens began to band together to study these sightings. A club in California and another in Washington State even offered a reward of three thousand dollars for proof that flying saucers existed.



This photograph was taken near Lima, Peru, in South America on October 19, 1973. It was snapped by an architect out looking at a house site with a client.

UPI/Bettmann

A Trip to Roswell

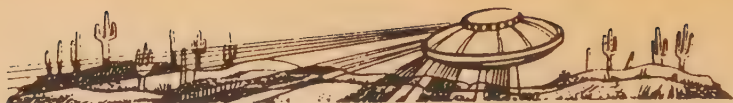


It was Sunday, July 6. After thinking about what to do with his find, Mac Brazel decided to take a few of the pieces of debris into Roswell to the sheriff's office. The drive would be long in his old truck, but he had put it off over the holiday and it was time to report what he had found.

No one knows why Mac decided to wait three days before reporting his find. Maybe he was afraid of sounding foolish. Whatever his reason for waiting, it remains a mystery.

Driving into Roswell, Mac wondered if he would get a reward if this turned out to be the wreckage of a real flying saucer. Three thousand dollars would go a long way, and Mac knew he would use part of the money to buy a new truck.

Sheriff George A. Wilcox was getting some pa-



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perwork out of the way when Mac arrived. His deputy, B.A. Clark, listened to Mac's story before calling the sheriff in to take a look at some of the material that Mac had brought along.

After a careful description of where Mac had found these strange bits of wire and metal, Sheriff Wilcox sent two deputies out to find the debris field.

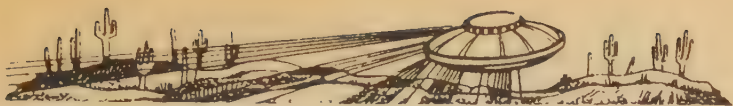
"We'd better let the military in on your story," Sheriff Wilcox suggested. "I think they're the ones who should check this out."

The response was immediate from 509th headquarters. Colonel William Blanchard and two other military men, Major Jesse Marcel and a counterintelligence officer named Sheridan Cavitt, arrived within the hour to interview Mac Brazel.

"I'll take some of this back to the base," Blanchard said, taking some pieces from the box that Mac had brought into the sheriff's office. "General Ramey will need to know about this. I want you to accompany Mr. Brazel back to his ranch and investigate this crash, and then report back to me."

After the colonel had left, the two officers arranged to follow Mac back to the ranch in their own cars.

The ride back to the ranch was a long one; about



A TRIP TO ROSWELL

seventy miles from Roswell. Major Marcel liked the feel of his '42 Buick, and he kept it in top running condition. He listened to the radio as he followed Mac's old truck. Captain Cavitt had opted to drive his military Jeep carryall for the trip. It was not a comfortable vehicle, but it was dependable and hardworking if they had to cross rugged terrain.

It was almost evening when they arrived at the ranch. The sun rested on the horizon like a giant wheel.

"Not much time to check out the site this evening." Jesse Marcel looked at Mac. "Is it far from here?"

"Not far," Mac assured them, "but the light's too far gone for you to see anything. I don't have much, but what I have you're welcome to share."

"We appreciate that," Captain Cavitt said.

Dinner that night was canned beans and hot black coffee. After dinner the dishes were washed, and the three men settled down to sleep. They wanted an early start.

"What if it is a crashed disc?" Marcel whispered.

"Then we'll go down in history." Cavitt smiled in the darkness.

That night, while waiting for his deputies to return, Sheriff Wilcox rummaged through the box



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of debris that Mac Brazel had brought into town. When the deputies did return, he asked them what they had found.

"We didn't find the field that Mr. Brazel described," one deputy said.

"So you didn't find anything?"

"We did find a place where the ground had been scorched," the second deputy said.

"It was a large blackened area that was baked solid. It looked as if a big round iron had been left on the ground too long," the first deputy said.

Meanwhile at 509th headquarters, Colonel Blanchard placed a call to General Ramey's office in Fort Worth, to tell him Mac Brazel's story.

"General Ramey, please," Colonel Blanchard said, holding the phone in his right hand while he waited to be put through to the general. "Hello, General. This is Colonel Blanchard at the 509th headquarters. Fine, and how are things in Fort Worth? Good. I called because a rancher near here brought in pieces of what he thinks is a flying saucer that crashed on his ranch. Yes, I'm holding a piece. Tonight? I guess we could. I'll see that it's taken care of. Thank you. Good-bye."

Colonel Blanchard looked at the collection of strange metallike objects scattered on his desk. He had taken them from the box at Sheriff Wilcox's office.

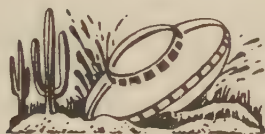


A TRIP TO ROSWELL

He picked up the phone again, "We'll need a plane and a pilot, pronto," he said. "I have a package that must be delivered to General Ramey in Texas tonight."



In the Field of Constant Wonders

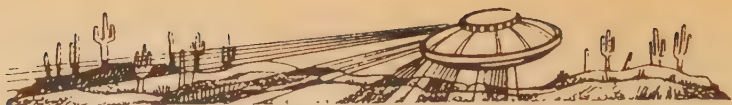


The three men at Mac's ranch were up the next day at the crack of dawn. After coffee, they piled into the two cars, and with Mac giving directions, headed for the "crash site."

Mac was anxious to find out what the two military men thought of the crash site. "What do you think it might be?" he asked when they reached the site. He still had some hope of collecting a reward for his discovery.

"We'll have to look around," Cavitt answered calmly, "before we can make any determination."

Mac watched as the two men began circling the littered field. They worked methodically, walking



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a few feet before stopping to look around, and then continuing their circle. They carried Geiger counters with them, and as they walked they frequently checked the fan-shaped readout window to make sure the needle was not dancing.

It took them some time to complete their peripheral inspection of the area. But they found no radiation, at least not on the periphery of the site. The area of the field over which the debris was scattered was about twelve hundred feet in length and two hundred feet across.

After spending most of the morning walking the field in a grid pattern looking for some clue to what this might be or where it came from, the two men began selecting samples of the various materials that littered the area. Following the grid and working from the outside toward the middle, they spent the afternoon loading samples into their cars.

The two men tried to select a good sample of the materials that littered the field. A kind of aluminum-foillike material seemed to be scattered evenly over the area. It was like foil, but it didn't have the shine. There were some small, structural I-beam-shaped pieces that looked as if they were made of balsa wood. They were light and thin but very strong. A third kind of material was something that looked like some kind of string. There



IN THE FIELD OF WONDERS

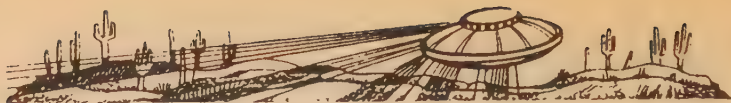
were other bits of debris that looked like old parchment as well.

Marcel and Cavitt measured a gouge in the field about five hundred feet long and about ten feet wide. The gouge looked as though something had scraped along the ground pushing the rocks and weeds aside. There was no evidence of what made the scrape at the site.

They worked until sunset—searching, checking for radiation, looking for clues, loading pieces of the strange materials into their cars. Mac wanted to know what they thought of samples they had collected. The two men, both well acquainted with military aircraft, were not willing to speculate about the day's activity. At nightfall they left to return to the base, to report their findings to Colonel Blanchard.

The beams of Jesse Marcel's '42 Buick's headlights were like beams of electric butter glowing in the dark New Mexico night. Although tired, he wanted to show his find to someone. On impulse, he decided to go home before reporting in at the base.

It was after midnight when he pulled into his drive. He hefted one of the boxes out of the trunk of his car and carried it into his house. Inside, he turned on the kitchen lights and put the box down



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on the table. He was tired and hungry and excited.

He spread out some of the material on the kitchen floor. It was like a giant jigsaw puzzle. He wanted to get some sense of how all this fit together, the I-beams, the wirelike material, and the various metals.

He woke his wife and son, Jesse, Jr., and brought them into the kitchen to have a look.

"What is it?" Jesse, Jr. wanted to know.

"Son, I don't know what it is," his father confided to the eleven-year-old boy.

"Look at this." Jesse, Jr. held one of the pieces of I-beam in his hand. "It looks like some kind of strange writing is on this piece."

They took turns examining the purplish symbols inscribed on the beam.

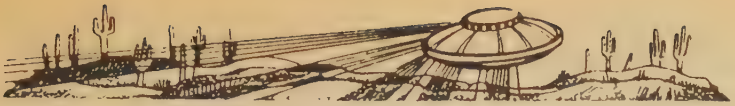
"Does it make any sense to you?" the boy asked.

"No," his father said.

"It's all so strange." Jesse's wife was holding a small piece of the filament as she spoke. "You'd better take it to the base."

Jesse, Jr. helped his father load the box and carry it back to the car. Then, before going inside, he watched his father drive off into the night.

As he drove toward the base, Jesse Marcel could see in his mind's eye the strange tiny marks embossed on the I-beam. They were both familiar, yet strange—a weird grouping of geometric symbols



IN THE FIELD OF WONDERS

resembling circles, squares, and triangles. They made no sense to him.

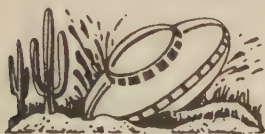
It was after 3 A.M. when he pulled into the base parking lot and began unloading his car. As he worked, he smiled. It wasn't often that a person found himself in the middle of a real mystery.



Major Jesse A. Marcel with pieces of the downed “weather balloon” during the official press conference about the crash at Roswell. He later told Walter Haut that the pieces had been substituted for the materials he had brought up from Roswell.

Fort Worth Star-Telegram Collection, Special Collections Division,
The University of Texas at Arlington Libraries

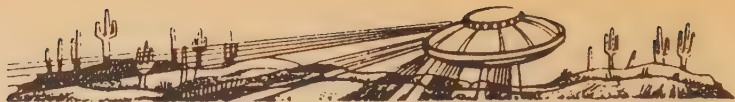
Press Release



Headline, *Roswell Daily Record*, July 8, 1947: RAAF CAPTURES FLYING SAUCER ON RANCH IN ROSWELL REGION. First Lieutenant Walter Haut read the headline and wondered where this would lead. After all, the headline was his responsibility. He had not seen the debris in the field. He had not interviewed William "Mac" Brazel. What he had done was follow orders.

As information officer for the 509th, he had released the following statement after being told to do so by his commanding officer, Colonel William Blanchard:

The public rumors regarding the flying disc became a reality yesterday when the intelligence office of the 509th Bomb Group of the



THE MYSTERY OF THE ROSWELL UFO

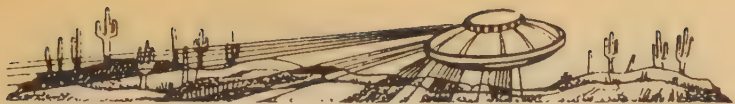
Eighth Air Force, Roswell Army Air Field, was fortunate enough to gain possession of a disc through the cooperation of one of the local ranchers and the sheriff's office of Chaves County.

The flying object landed on a ranch near Roswell sometime last week. Not having phone facilities, the rancher stored the disc until such time as he was able to contact the sheriff's office, who in turn notified Major Jesse A. Marcel of the 509th Bomb Group Intelligence Office.

Action was immediately taken and the disc was picked up at the rancher's home. It was inspected at the Roswell Army Air Field and subsequently loaned by Major Marcel to higher headquarters.

The publication of this press release led to a worldwide clamor for more information. The reaction was overwhelming, and calls poured into Roswell from all over.

Everyone wanted to find out about the recovered disc. Phone calls did not stop coming at the sheriff's office, the newspaper, and the radio stations in Roswell. The 509th's switchboard was swamped. At last, the world believed, a flying saucer had been recovered.



PRESS RELEASE

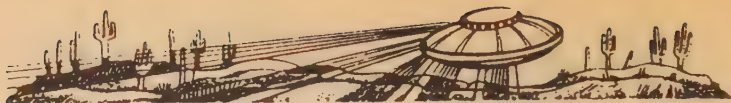
Or had it? While calls were coming in from all over the world, the army had also been busy. Men were sent out to Mac Brazel's ranch to clean up the debris at the crash site. The area around the site was cordoned off, and no one was allowed near the cleanup.

Mac Brazel, who had become a kind of instant celebrity in Roswell, was interviewed by a local radio station and he spoke openly about his marvelous discovery. Shortly after the interview, however, he disappeared from sight for about a week. While most agree that he was taken to the 509th Bomb Squadron Air Base, no one knows what went on while he was there.

General Ramey ordered the collected wreckage be sent to Carswell Air Force Base in Fort Worth, Texas, for his inspection. Jesse Marcel flew to Fort Worth, along with some of the materials he had collected from Mac Brazel's ranch pasture, to meet with General Ramey.

In Fort Worth, the aircraft was met by army personnel and quickly unloaded. Major Marcel was taken to the general's office where some of the strange materials were examined by the general.

Major Marcel left the general for a debriefing session. When he returned, he found that a press conference had been called. The general had invited reporters to his office to examine the crash



THE MYSTERY OF THE ROSWELL UFO

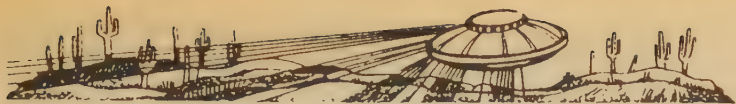
wreckage for themselves. But something was not right.

To Major Marcel's amazement, the materials assembled on the floor of General Ramey's office looked nothing like what he had collected from the field of Mac Brazel's ranch and rushed to Fort Worth. The last twenty-four hours seemed like a strange dream to Jesse Marcel.

"It was only a weather balloon," General Ramey told the press. And held up pieces of what had once been a Rawin target weather device. These balloons were made of several large polyethylene sacks filled with helium. Beneath these balloons several kitelike radar reflectors were attached. These reflectors were made of balsa wood and a thinly foiled paper.

General Ramey's press conference was a success. On July 9, the *Fort Worth Star Telegram* carried photographs of General Ramey and Major Marcel holding pieces of weather balloon wreckage. The Associated Press distributed the story across the country. It was now official: the army had mistaken a downed weather balloon for a flying saucer.

Colonel Blanchard, the man who had ordered the press release that claimed recovery of a flying disc, went on vacation. And Mac Brazel? He appeared, in the company of army personnel, at



PRESS RELEASE

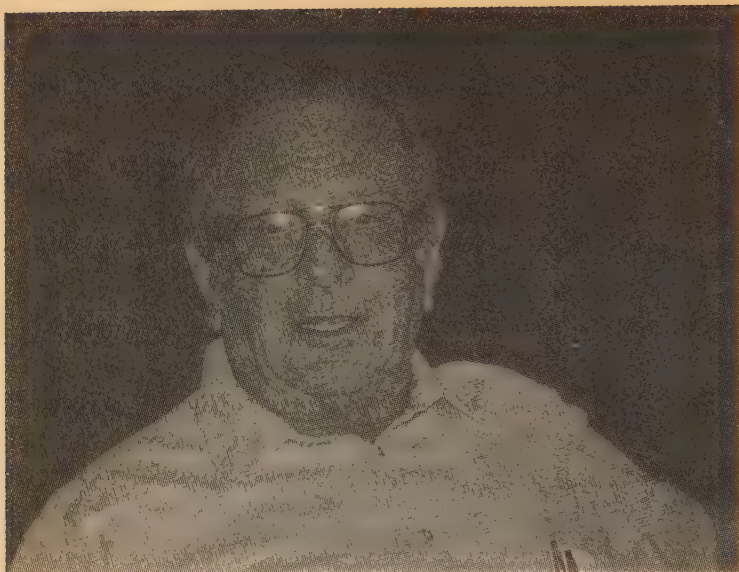
Roswell radio station KGFL to give a second interview. This time he concurred with the army; what he had found was now confirmed to be nothing more than the wreckage of a weather balloon.

Mac Brazel went back to the ranch, to the newly cleaned field, where he went about his business looking after his livestock. For a moment, he had been famous. He never talked with outsiders about what he had found or what happened to him while he was held in custody by the military.

The story of William "Mac" Brazel's discovery does not end here. Mac would not live to see the publication in 1980 of a full-length book about his discovery (*The Roswell Incident*, by Charles Berlitz and William L. Moore). But why has the story survived? Because many believe that what Mac found was not a weather balloon but part of a real flying saucer.

In 1992, Walter Haut (the man who wrote the press release claiming recovery of a flying disc) was asked if he believed that a flying saucer had crashed in 1947. Major Jessé Marcel had lived only a block from him in Roswell, he said. His curiosity led to a discussion with Marcel about the materials the major had collected from the field.

Marcel told Haut that he had taken one of the I-beams, with the strange symbols on it, from the wreckage and given it a primitive test of his own.

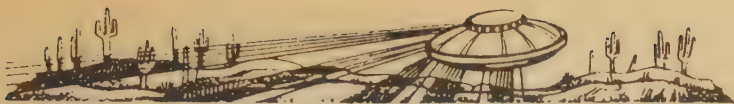


Walter Haut today, in Roswell. Haut was the communications officer on duty in the Air Force 509th who was asked to make the original announcement regarding the saucer crash discovered by Mac Brazel. The army retracted the announcement as a mistake within a day.

Shannon Gilligan

Using two cinder blocks to support the ends of the balsalike I-beam, he tried to break the thin beam with a sixteen-pound sledgehammer. It would not break.

What about the weather balloon story? Marcel told Walter Haut that General Ramey had pulled a switch; while he was out of the room, the weather balloon pieces had been substituted for the real materials.



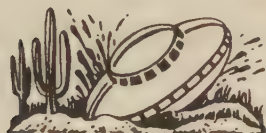
PRESS RELEASE

The most interesting remark made by Marcel was this: the materials he collected, he said, "were not of this world."

While Walter Haut never saw any of the collected wreckage, he believes what he was told by his neighbor and fellow officer. At least part of something that had never been seen before was found in 1947, and the military decided to keep it quiet. Something, to quote Major Jesse Marcel, "not of this world."

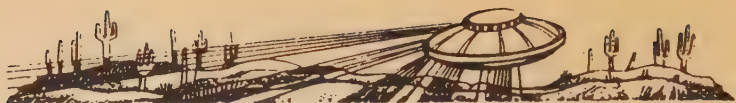


Creatures from Outer Space



Whatever Mac Brazel found, most UFOlogists agree it was not a weather balloon. What if he did find a flying saucer? Most agree that this is not what happened either. At best, what Mac Brazel found was part of a UFO.

In 1950, a civil engineer named Grady “Barney” Barnett began telling people a strange story. It seems that Barney Barnett was working near Magdalena, New Mexico, in early July 1947 when he came across what he thought was a downed aircraft. When he reached the silvery metallic object he realized that it wasn’t an ordinary aircraft; it looked more like one of those flying discs everyone was talking about.



THE MYSTERY OF THE ROSWELL UFO

What really convinced him that this aircraft was from outer space was the presence of humanoid creatures, apparently thrown out of the craft on impact with the earth, on the ground near the saucer.

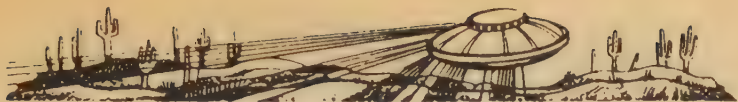
Barnett told friends that he was close enough to lean over and touch one of these creatures. He described the aliens as small, hairless, with strange eyes, and humanoid bodies.

According to Barnett, other people saw the crashed saucer as well. A team of archaeologists, working in the region, arrived while he was there. While they all stood around the craft, a military team arrived. No one is sure how many soldiers there were, as Barnett did not specify.

The military team was concerned that civilians had seen the downed saucer. An officer told them that they were not to discuss what they had seen with anyone. It was important; in fact, it was a matter of national security and to talk about this discovery would be "unpatriotic."

The officer must have sounded like he meant what he said, for it took Barney Barnett three years before he began to tell his story, even to his friends.

Grady "Barney" Barnett died in 1969. No members of any archaeological team, working in that area of New Mexico, have come forward to verify



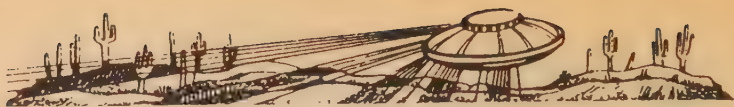
CREATURES FROM OUTER SPACE

his story. So why does the story persist, and how is it connected to the debris that Mac Brazel discovered?

The night before Mac Brazel found his pasture littered with wreckage, there was a violent lightning storm northwest of Roswell. The Wilmots witnessed a flying saucer pass over their house, headed in the direction of the storm in the direction of Corona, New Mexico. Mac was awakened by an explosion, which was different from the sound of thunder, for which there was no explanation. These pieces of information, along with Barney Barnett's story, have led to two theories about what happened the night of July 2, 1947.

One theory is that a UFO, flying through the violent storm, was struck by lightning while over the ranch where Mac was the foreman. The explosion was made by the impact of the lightning blasting part of the craft to bits. Debris from the crippled ship was what Mac discovered the next morning. The crippled spacecraft lost altitude and slid along the earth, causing the gouge in the field, before regaining altitude. The doomed craft tried to stay aloft before it crashed back to earth some distance away.

The second theory is that some internal malfunction, rather than lightning, caused an explosion which blew a hole in the spacecraft. This



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theory accounts for the large area over which the debris was spread.

Since Mac's discovery in 1947 and Barney's tale of finding a complete saucer as well as alien bodies in the early 1950s, this story of a crashed UFO and recovery of both saucer and crew have persisted.

In 1990, the television show *Unsolved Mysteries* aired the broadcast of a program on the Roswell incident. As usual, they asked for anyone with information about a downed flying saucer to call the show.

A man named Gerald Anderson phoned the show and claimed he had information about the downed saucer.

According to an article in *The Roswell Report* (see Bibliography), he then followed up the call with a letter explaining that he had seen the downed spacecraft as well as the bodies of the alien crew members. He had been there in July 1947 just before the military arrived.

He and his family had been rock hunting on the Plains of San Agustin when they came over a small rise. Looking down into a gully, they saw an object on the slope. He believed this object was a spacecraft. Anderson wrote in his letter that he saw creatures lying beside the spacecraft and that they were not all dead.



CREATURES FROM OUTER SPACE

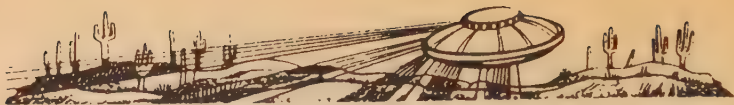
In a follow-up story two years later, in January 1992, the Fox Network broadcast a show called *The UFO Report*. One of the segments focused on Gerald Anderson's story.

The Plains of San Agustin, near Magdalena, are desertlike. The soil is rocky, and the only shade is provided by yucca plants scattered sparsely across the landscape. In the morning light, small pools of shadow point west from the base of each yucca.

The camera crew filmed Gerald Anderson, a man in his late forties, as he walked among the rocks and scrub of this harsh semidesert environment. He carried a handful of thin metal poles with flags attached, the kind of pennant-shaped flags that fly from strings over the lots of car dealerships.

Using four of these markers he showed the position of the crew from the downed saucer. The narrator's voice told us that when the Anderson family came across the crashed spacecraft two aliens were dead, a third was dying, and a fourth was still alive.

Gerald Anderson said his father and uncle were trying to communicate with the lone survivor of the crash when "Suddenly he turned and looked at me. And when that happened all kinds of things just started happening inside my head. I started getting sensations of tumbling and falling and an



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awful loneliness. Like there was no way he could get back to where he came from.”

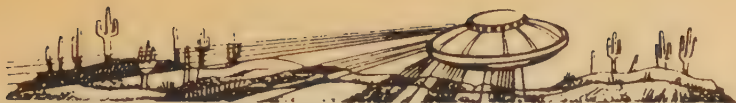
Gerald Anderson was five years old at the time of this encounter. None of the family members who were with him that day is still alive today to confirm his story.

Like Grady “Barney” Barnett’s story, the military arrived shortly after the discovery and everyone was told that they must not talk about what they had seen.

Had Gerald Anderson and Barney Barnett come across the same downed UFO? The location and the story of the arrival of the military match.

But there is still much confusion about this second crash site (the first being the debris-covered field discovered by Mac Brazel). Kevin Randle and Donald Schmitt, authors of *UFO Crash at Roswell*, believe that the second crash site may not have been near Magdalena, but rather only two or three miles from the first site.

They suggest that Barney Barnett may have told the truth about finding a downed saucer but changed the location of where he had found it to comply with the military order to keep quiet about his discovery. Their research turned up a work diary kept by Barney Barnett. According to the diary, he was nowhere near Magdalena on the day he came across the downed saucer.



CREATURES FROM OUTER SPACE

It makes sense, logically, that a damaged spacecraft could not travel three hundred miles with a hole ripped in its side. A damaged craft is more likely to have “bounced” and covered only a few more miles before the final impact.

Because there is so little evidence available (Gerald Anderson said in his 1990 letter that the Army Corps did not get all the wreckage, but he didn’t say what happened to the rest of it), and because there are so few firsthand observers still alive to tell their story, we may never know the true story. Was it really a flying saucer? Were there alien crew members in that wreckage? If so, what happened to them? Why is it so hard to find out any information? Is there something the government knows and doesn’t want us to know?



Brigadier General Roger Ramey with materials from the downed "weather balloon."

*Fort Worth Star-Telegram Collection, Special Collections
Division, The University of Texas at Arlington Libraries*

Aftermath

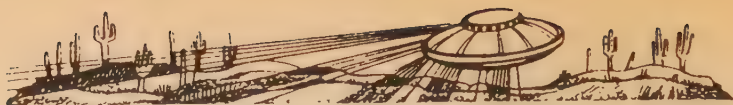


Even though the government has consistently denied that there has been any military cover-up of the incident, the stories about the Roswell saucer crash persist to this day. UFOlogists continue to research the event and over the years have found hundreds of people who have some knowledge of the incident.

Some things took place at Roswell that were very much out of the ordinary. For example, the army closed off the field and would not allow anyone near the site even though they claimed the “saucer” was only a downed weather balloon.

Mac Brazel was taken to the Roswell army base where he was kept away from the news media for several days, after which he gave an interview contradicting his original story.

Mac Brazel had a son who told of finding some pieces of debris that the army had missed when they cleaned up the crash site. When word got out



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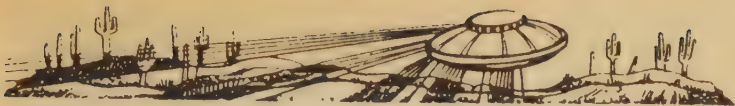
that he had found these materials, military people came out to his place and asked him to turn them over to the government.

Remember the box of materials that started all this? The box that Mac took into the sheriff's office? The army didn't forget. Soldiers were sent back to the sheriff's office, and the box of materials was confiscated.

Several people, including Barney Barnett and Gerald Anderson, have said that the army wanted them to keep quiet, that it was a matter of national security.

Over the years other stories have bubbled to the surface. They are stories about the location of the crash site, about secret flights to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base with the bodies of the alien crew members, about a secret location in Arizona where scientists are studying captured flying saucers and trying to discover the secrets they hold.

There is no question that something fell to earth on Mac Brazel's ranch on or about July 2, 1947. And while it is conceivable that this debris could have been from an ordinary weather balloon, it seems unlikely. It is true that weather balloon devices were in common use in the area at that time. And it is a fact that weather devices over the years have been the catalysts for many of the UFO sightings reported.



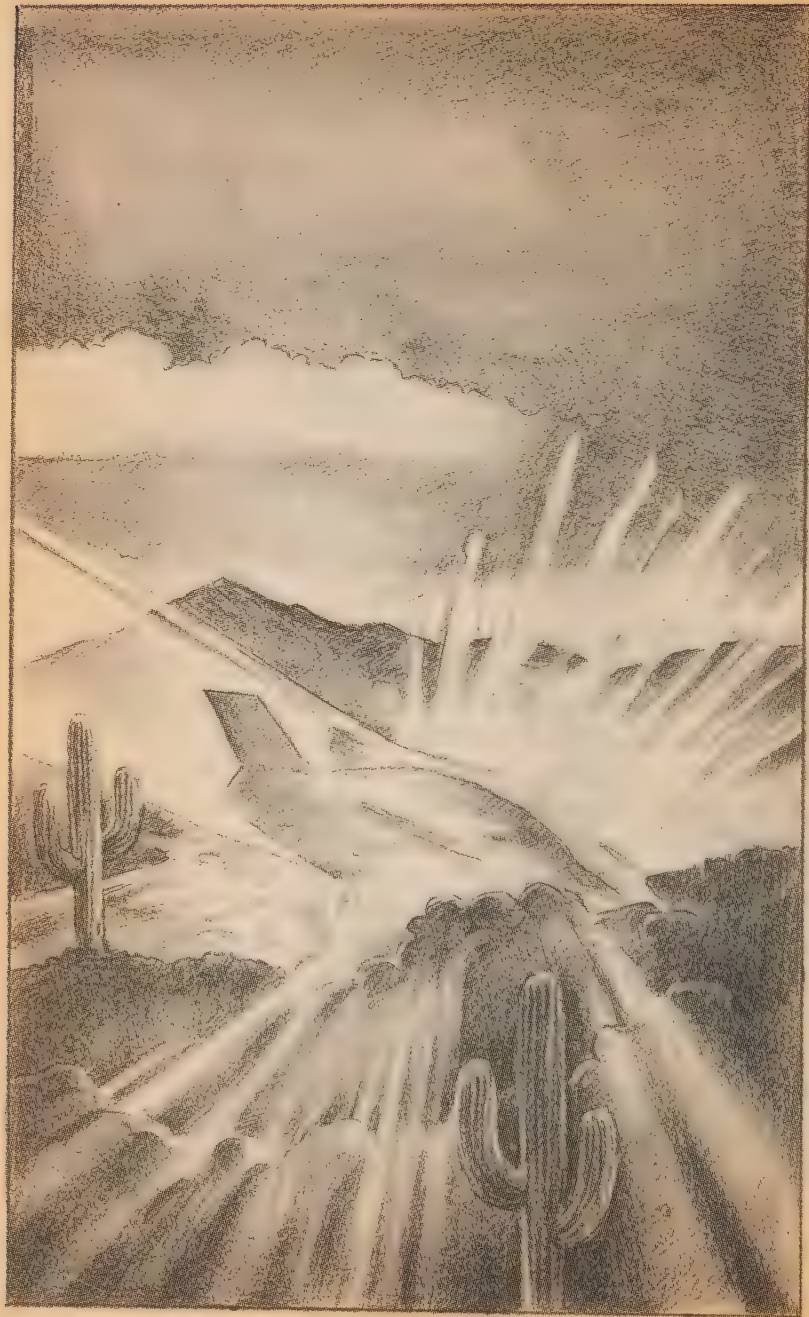
AFTERMATH

But the story that the Roswell debris belonged to a weather balloon does not ring true. People in the area were familiar with the way downed weather balloons appeared, and many of those who saw the debris from the Roswell crash site said that it did not look like a weather balloon. Besides, why would the military be so secretive about a crashed weather balloon? Why did it require seven planeloads to transport the so-called "weather balloon" to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Texas?

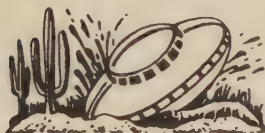
Was there a close encounter in 1947?

Major Jesse Marcel believed there was. He kept quiet for many years, but in the late seventies he said that what had been found near Roswell, New Mexico, was not a weather balloon. He claimed that the government had tricked everyone by switching the materials he had delivered to Fort Worth. The materials he collected, discovered by Mac Brazel, were, he said, "not of this world."

The government has denied that anything unusual happened near Roswell. But what happened to the collected debris that was shipped out of Roswell in 1947? What happened to the humanoid creatures that several people claimed they saw? To this day, answers to these questions remain a mystery.



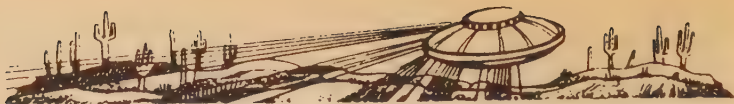
Cover-Up



Would our government keep information about UFOs from its citizens? The answer to that question is yes. The most often given reason for the necessity of the government's withholding information is to protect the national security. We all understand that certain information must be kept secret for military purposes.

But if a UFO was recovered at Roswell, why would the government keep it a secret? There are many possible reasons: 1) they don't want to panic the country, 2) by keeping it a secret they are not obligated to share any technology derived from the discovery with other nations, and 3) some knowledge gained from the recovery itself prevents them from releasing information.

Project Blue Book was created in the late 1940s.



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A special air force team was established with the duty of investigating all reported UFO sightings. The Project Blue Book team investigated more than twelve thousand UFO reports and was able to find a reasonable explanation for most of the reported sightings.

In 1969 Project Blue Book was disbanded. They had been able to explain away all but 701 of the more than twelve thousand sightings they had investigated.

But 701 unexplained UFO sightings is quite a few.

The government was not interested in UFOs, they said, not enough to continue funding Project Blue Book. But many government people became believers in UFOs because of Project Blue Book. One of them was J. Allen Hynek, founder of the Center for UFO Studies and a scientist who worked on Project Blue Book.

Another person to join the ranks of believers in UFOs was Rear Admiral Roscoe Hillenkoetter. According to an essay called "What the Admiral Knew," written by Bruce Maccabee, Admiral Hillenkoetter was made head of the Central Intelligence Group (later the CIA) in 1947.

Years later, the admiral joined a UFO group and was active in trying to get the government to release information about UFOs. The admiral felt,



COVER-UP

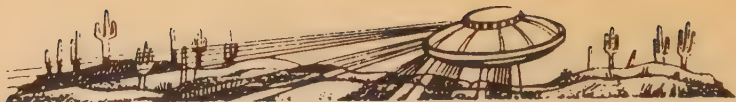
like many others, that the government was holding back.

Again, why would the government not share information with its people? Many officials, high up in government, felt that if the people of our planet realized they were being visited by members of a more technologically advanced race, they would panic, possibly causing our civilization to collapse. After all, great Indian civilizations collapsed in the past when the technologically superior Europeans invaded them, bringing diseases such as small pox, influenza and the measles to the "New World." Would outer space visitors bring new diseases to which we have no resistance?

While this panic theory may seem farfetched, it actually had been dramatically enacted a decade earlier. In the 1930s a famous actor named Orson Welles created a statewide panic in New Jersey, when he broadcast a radio play called *The War of the Worlds*. He broadcast this play on April first, *April Fool's Day*.

Even though he explained at the beginning of the broadcast that it was only a dramatization of the novel by H. G. Wells, the play had the form of a newscast.

The broadcaster proceeded to tell a story, complete with sound effects, of how a spacecraft of invading aliens from Mars had crashed in New



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Jersey. Other spaceships were soon to arrive. What followed was a report of havoc and destruction as the aliens closed in on the lone reporter. The breathless announcer was heroic until the end.

People who turned on their radios a little late, after the explanation that the “newscast” was only a radio play, panicked. Even some of the people who *had* heard the explanation were so taken by the story’s realism that they believed it was really happening. All over New Jersey and the surrounding listening area, people were piling into their cars and making a run for safety. The *War of the Worlds* broadcast was probably the greatest April fools’ joke in history.

Another possible theory of why the government would cover up these strange happenings is that these “things” were not from outer space at all, but rather creations of the United States military. As noted in an earlier chapter, the United States had just created the world’s most destructive weapon, the atomic bomb, in total secrecy. If the government could do this, why couldn’t they create flying disc?

Even though the government said they were not interested in UFOs, when the Freedom of Information Act was passed in the 1970s, many docu-



COVER-UP

ments were released that indicated more than a casual interest by the government.

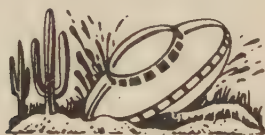
The Freedom of Information Act mandates the United States government to release information, if requested by a citizen, that does not jeopardize national security. After the act was passed thousands of UFO-subject documents were released.

The government is allowed to censor released documents if they feel it is in the best interests of the nation to do so. Many of the UFO documents are black with the censor's marker—unreadable.

Some UFOlogists believe that the government is preparing its citizens for the truth about UFOs (whatever that "truth" may be). They are doing this, for example, by passing bills such as the Freedom of Information Act, by funding the radio telescope programs that listen to outer space for signals from other life-forms, and by supporting the space program itself. Advocates of this theory believe that when we are ready, the government will tell everything.

Does the United States government believe there is intelligent life out there in the distant universe? The answer would have to be yes. In January 1992, the Jet Propulsion Laboratory announced a new multimillion-dollar radio telescope project designed to search for life in outer space.

What to Do If You See a UFO

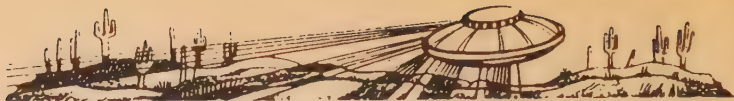


We can only hope that the mystery of Mac Brazel's discovery and the stories of crashed UFOs and alien crew members will be solved one day. In the meantime you may be interested in learning what to do if you encounter a UFO.

Even though the number of UFO sightings has decreased in recent years, there have been some very convincing recent sightings.

For example, a Japan Airlines flight, carrying a shipment of French wine from Paris to Tokyo, reported a close encounter on November 17, 1986.

It was written up in several newspapers and an article was carried in the *International UFO Re-*



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porter. In the *UFO Reporter* article, Dr. Bruce Macabee quotes the JAL flight captain, Kenju Terauchi, as saying, "It was about seven or so minutes since we began paying attention to the lights, most unexpectedly, two spaceships stopped in front of our face, shooting off lights. The inside cockpit shone brightly and I felt warm in the face.

"Then three to seven seconds later, a fire like from jet engines stopped and became a small circle of lights as they began to fly in level flight at the same speed as we were, showing numerous numbers of exhaust pipes... Its size was about the same size as the body of a DC-8 jet, and with numerous exhaust pipes."

Although there were no other known flights in the area at the time, radar confirmed that something was in the air near the JAL aircraft. No explanation, other than a true UFO sighting, has been offered for this incident.

Another example are the videotapes made by the Belgian air force. On an *Unsolved Mysteries* show, aired in 1991, it was reported that several UFO sightings had been made along the border between Germany and Belgium.

When a group of Brussels citizens called in one such sighting, the Belgian air force scrambled. Pilots closed in on the object and watched in amazement as it shot almost straight up from an



WHAT TO DO IF YOU SEE A UFO

elevation of two hundred feet to several thousand feet in a matter of seconds.

This maneuver was recorded by video cameras mounted in the aircraft cockpit and focused on the radar screen. No known aircraft is capable of the rapid acceleration and altitude change that the Belgian pilots recorded.

These are just two examples of true UFO sightings. But what should you do if you see a strange object in the sky? In the book *How to Catch a UFO*, James Deem devotes a few chapters to the kind of equipment you'll need and how to make a sighting chart. If you're interested in becoming a UFOlogist, you should check with your library to see if they have the book.

Here are some common-sense guidelines for what you should do if you spot a UFO:

- 1) Let other people know. It's better if several people see the object.

- 2) If you're lucky enough to have a camera, take a picture. There are few good photographs of UFOs.

- 3) Make note of time, place, and conditions of the sighting. It's important that you do this as soon as possible as we tend to forget details. Think about what the UFO looked like—its shape, color, size, and any other details that you think might be important.



This photo was taken in Hillsdale, Michigan, in July 1965. The air force tried to tell the citizenry it was just swamp gas, a story challenged by the director of the local Civil Defense, William Van Horn.

UPI/Bettmann

4) If there is evidence of a landing, make sure the site is not disturbed. Get help.

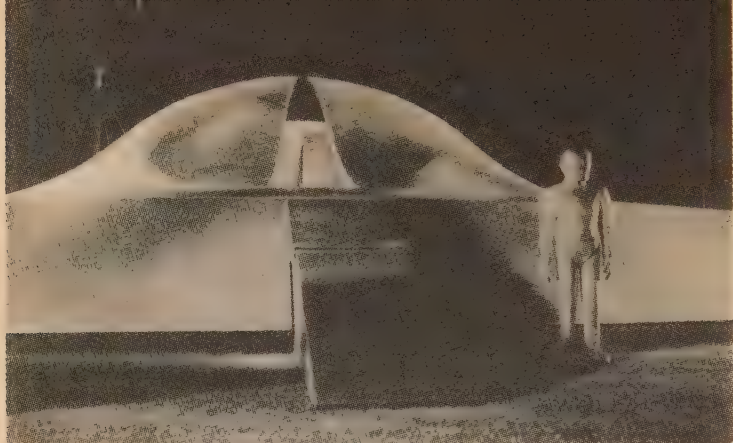
5) Finally, report your sighting to the Center for UFO Studies. Their phone number is (312) 271-3611.

6) When you have time, write and tell me about your experience, care of Avon Books.



WHAT TO DO IF YOU SEE A UFO

If you're interested in publications about UFOs or want information, contact the Center for UFO Studies. Their address is: J. Allen Hynek Center for UFO Studies, 2457 West Peterson Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60659.



A shot from the popular UFO film *The Day the Earth Stood Still*. The look of the spacecraft was no doubt influenced by earlier photos and eyewitness reports of actual UFOs.

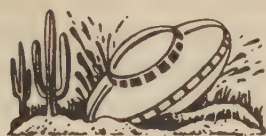
Courtesy Photofest



Another depiction of UFOs in the film *Earth vs. the Flying Saucers*. Notice how they look suspiciously like two plates glued together.

Courtesy Photofest

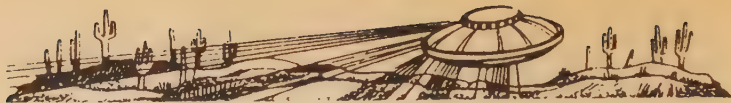
Movies About UFOs



UFOs have long been a subject of interest to filmmakers. There are some very good films and, of course, some very bad films about UFOs. The following movies were chosen for two reasons: first, because they deal with the UFO phenomenon, and, secondly, because they are entertaining.

Close Encounters of the Third Kind Steven Spielberg's best film on the subject. It was made several years before *E.T.* with a cast that includes the famous French film director Francois Truffaut and, if you pay attention, Dr. J. Allen Hynek himself.

E.T.: The Extra-Terrestrial Another Spielberg film—emotional, entertaining, and fun. It might be fun to watch these two films as a double feature



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(pop lots of corn and send out for pizza), to compare Spielberg's filmmaking techniques as well as his vision of how aliens might look.

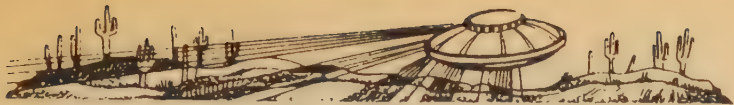
Flight of the Navigator This Disney film is fun because of its special effects. While the UFO is clearly out of this world, the notion of time travel—remember Einstein—is the central theme.

Batteries Not Included This comedy about tiny UFOs that end up helping the residents of a condemned building is unique in that the spacecraft are the life-forms.

Cocoon The focus of this film is not about UFOs, but they do play a major part in the film. Very entertaining.

Communion This is a film that you should not watch unless you check with your parents first. The subject of the film is the abduction by UFO crew members of a writer who is spending the weekend at his vacation house in upstate New York. The process of recall and discovery while under hypnosis is fascinating.

The Day the Earth Stood Still Get ready for a jolt—this film is old (it was made in 1952). It was old



MOVIES ABOUT UFOS

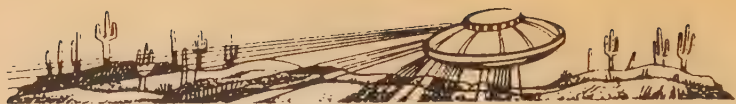
when I saw it in the seventh grade. It is made in black and white. It is listed because it's a classic, one of the first films that presents beings from another world that are concerned about the planet earth.

The Adventures of Buckaroo Banzai Across the Eighth Dimension This film is for laughs. Enjoy.

Star Wars This is the first in the series and, I think, the best. While it is not about UFOs visiting earth, it does represent, in a credible way, the possibility of a variety of life-forms in this and other universes. If you haven't seen it, you should.

Alien Another futuristic film about a crew of space travelers who encounter the scariest, worst nightmare-type alien that you can imagine. Don't see without parents' permission.

2001: A Spacy Odyssey This Stanley Kubrick film is based on a book by Arthur C. Clarke. The notion is that in the distant past, intelligent life was introduced to the earth by visitors from another world. An excellent film that has a frightening message about computer-controlled environments. You'll find HAL interesting.

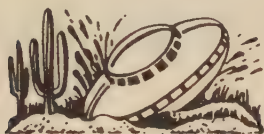


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Mysterious Worlds Series—Vol. 1, *UFOs* This is a Time-Life video series that examines the unexplained. Oddly enough, it is hosted by none other than Arthur C. Clarke. In *UFOs* you'll see some footage of people who say they have had close encounters with UFOs. One of the most interesting segments is actual footage of Kenneth Arnold, the man who saw the flying disc near Mt. Rainier, Washington, in 1947.

All the films listed in this chapter are available on video cassettes. Check with your local store.

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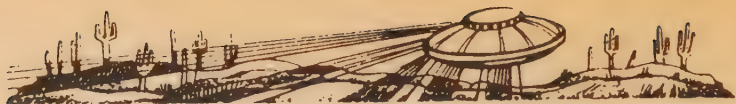
The following two books are well-written introductions to the history, methods, cases, and terminology of the UFO movement:

Cohen, Daniel. *UFOs: The Third Wave*. New York: M. Evans and Company, 1988.

Deem, James M. *How to Catch a Flying Saucer*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1991.

Here are three books about the Roswell incident described in this History Mystery:

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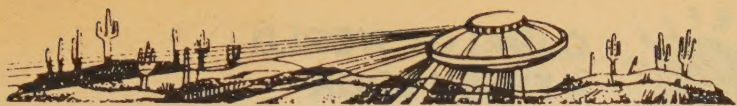
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Vallee, Jacques, *The Invisible College: What a Group of Scientists Has Discovered About UFO Influences on the Human Race*. New York: E. P. Dutton, 1975.

A few of the books listed above may be out of print, but you should be able to get them through your local library.



CAMELOT WORLD A FRESH LOOK AT OUR WORLD

- THE MYSTERIOUS CAT 76038-X/\$2.95 US/\$3.50 Can
by Elizabeth Garrick
- HOT MACHINES 76039-8/\$2.95 US/\$3.50 Can
by Gregory Pope
- SECRETS OF THE SAMURAI 76040-1/\$2.95 US/\$3.50 Can
by Carol Gaskin
- A KID'S GUIDE TO HOW TO SAVE THE PLANET 76041-X/\$2.95 US/\$3.50 Can
by Billy Goodman
- GREAT DISASTERS 76043-6/\$2.95 US/\$3.50 Can
by David Keller
- DOLLS 76044-4/\$2.95 US/\$3.50 Can
by Vivian Werner
- UFOS AND ALIENS 76045-2/\$2.95 US/\$3.50 Can
by William R. Alschuler
- A KID'S GUIDE TO HOW TO SAVE THE ANIMALS 76651-5/\$2.99 US/\$3.50 Can
by Billy Goodman
- SECRETS OF THE DOLPHINS 76046-0/\$2.95 US/\$3.50 Can
by Diana Reiss
- WHAT IS WAR? WHAT IS PEACE? 76704-X/\$2.95 US/\$3.50 Can
by Richard Rabinowitz

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